



LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR PEACE PROJECT

Case Study

Reintegration Efforts in a Post-War Context: The Activities of Danish Refugee Council and Norwegian Refugee Council in Mozambique

This case study is one of a series of case studies developed as part of the Local Capacities for Peace Project, directed by the Collaborative for Development Action (CDA), in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA.

The Project seeks to identify the ways in which international humanitarian and/or development assistance given in conflict settings may be provided so that, rather than exacerbating and worsening the conflict, it helps local people to disengage and to establish alternative systems for dealing with the problems which underlie the conflict.

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**REINTEGRATION EFFORTS IN A POST-WAR CONTEXT:
THE ACTIVITIES OF DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL AND NORWEGIAN REFUGEE
COUNCIL IN MOZAMBIQUE**

"This time in Mozambique is a time of broken hearts.... but we are working now and filling our hearts with work. So like this we can begin to forget, our hearts are being calmed; there is no place in our hearts for sadness and fear any more as they are filled up with work." Returnee from Milange in S. Gibb (1994): Post-War Social Reconstruction in Mozambique.

1 INTRODUCTION

When the General Peace Accord for Mozambique was signed on 4 October 1992, large numbers of refugees started returning from all neighboring countries including Swaziland, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania. At the end of 1994 most of the estimated 1.5 million had returned, the large majority from Malawi to the northern provinces of Tete and Zambezia. Although, most of the refugees returned spontaneously, the international community assisted a number of refugees in organized movements from the countries of asylum. At the same time an estimated three million internally displaced, 100000 soldiers and a number of people who had been in captivity were also returning to their homes.

The returnees came back to a country totally destroyed by war and largely dependent on assistance from the international community in its rehabilitation and reintegration efforts. Two of the many international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) involved with assisting returned populations were the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). The two organizations started their work in Mozambique soon after the peace agreement was signed in different areas of the country and with different strategies. The following is an account of the activities of these two NGOs and how they might have contributed to the ongoing peace and reconciliation processes in the country.

2 MOZAMBIQUE IN THE TRANSITION FROM WAR TO PEACE

When the peace plan was signed it put an end to more than ten years of civil war in the country between the governing Frelimo party (National Liberation Front) and the rebel movement Renamo (Mozambican National Resistance), which followed not long after the independence struggle from colonial rule. Frelimo stayed in power throughout the war, and the conflict was focused on the rural areas where Renamo had its base. Renamo's strategy was to destroy infrastructure and take control over civilian populations. Renamo would often kidnap people to their military bases, especially women and children, to perform work, produce food, transport weapons and equipment and for forced sexual relations. The killings,

torture and destruction was, however, committed on both sides, and it has been considered a most vicious war in which many people suffered terribly. Displays of hatred and aggression were expected when people started to return to their places of origin. However, there were surprisingly few incidences of retribution, and the international community was amazed at the Mozambican people's ability to forget and will to resume their lives in peace and quiet.

Mozambique held its first multiparty democratic election in October 1994. The turnout was very high at approximately ninety percent and it went by surprisingly peaceful and well-organized. Both the presidential and the legislative elections were won by the Frelimo party, although the Renamo party got strong support in the latter.

The long period of war had a devastating effect on the country. One million killed, more than four million made refugees or internally displaced and more than 20 billion USD in damage, are often cited statistics. Most of the infrastructure was destroyed leaving vast rural areas and some urban areas without water, electricity, accessible roads, and buildings. The war also impoverished the country in terms of human resources. People were brutally tortured and killed and those who survived were still suffering the after-effects of trauma and losses. The rate of education and literacy declined and the education sector was struggling with in a huge budget deficit and lack of school facilities and teachers. The war had not only destroyed physical structures, but also the social fabric of local communities. Rehabilitation was not only a question of buildings and roads, but of communities and individuals.

During the war years the international agencies were involved in emergency relief providing food, non-food items and health services. At the end of the war the assistance started shifting to rehabilitation or construction of infrastructure and providing food, seeds, tools and other items to primarily returning populations. After elections the assistance again shifted from short-term emergency relief and reconstruction activities towards more long-term and sustainable community activities. However, most of the refugee organizations concentrated their activities on distributions of food and non-food items, transportation to final destinations, rehabilitation and construction of infrastructure in the areas of highest returnee concentration, and assisting vulnerable groups in returning.

The government considered the international agencies as essential partners in the task of rehabilitating and rebuilding the country, not the least because they provided funding. As large numbers of people had grown accustomed to receiving food assistance from the international community during the war years, a concern of the Government was to change people's mentality of dependence to a mentality of self-sufficiency. Another major concern was the development and integration of the Renamo controlled areas into the state administration, which many considered the greatest challenge to the peace process. During the war years most of these areas became totally isolated; inaccessible both physically and politically. They were often cut off from food distributions, from the national school and health systems, from commercial networks, and often lacked infrastructure. By the time of the elections, they remained the most underdeveloped although they were not as inaccessible as earlier.

3. THE ACTIVITIES OF THE DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

DRC started in Mozambique with a close working relationship with the Danish NGO IBIS, which specialized in infrastructure and logistics in war-affected societies and had been working in Mozambique since the 1980s. In 1992 DRC and IBIS established a project consortium in order to start a program in Milange district of Zambezia province where IBIS already had been working for some years. In September 1992 representatives of both organizations sent a fact-finding mission to Mozambique and to some refugee camps in Malawi. The mission concluded that the consortium should assist the physical rehabilitation and integration of returnees in Milange district. DRC would be responsible for the repatriation part as it had its experience and competence in the area of humanitarian assistance, and IBIS would work on rehabilitation of infrastructure as that was their field of expertise. The target groups were identified as returnees, including refugees, internally displaced, and war-affected groups in areas under both Renamo and Government control. The main objectives were on the one hand, to assist and strengthen Mozambican institutions involved in the repatriation process and on the other hand, to be as close as possible to the local capacities and beneficiaries.

DRC and IBIS picked the district of Milange in Zambezia province for several reasons: the expected return of a huge number of refugees; the war had been particularly severe there; and few international NGOs were present in contrast to Tete province which was DRC's other alternative. Before the war the population of Milange had been 300000 and during the war the majority fled to Malawi or other areas in the country. Before the war Milange was known for its natural beauty, high altitude, good soil and plentiful rainfall. It was also known for its production of tea and surplus of corn and beans, and for industrious and hard-working people. The fighting for control over Milange had been intense and left all infrastructure (schools, roads, health clinics, administration buildings) in ruins. Towards the end of 1992 returnees started arriving sporadically and by 1993 there was a regular stream of people coming back. Gradually life came back to Milange. People cleared and planted land and built provisional housing. Business-men returned, the market grew and more shops opened.

DRC started working in Milange in April/May 1993 with one expatriate, a local driver and guard. It was the first organization with a functioning office in Milange and therefore became a center of coordination and assistance to all the volunteers and staff working for local partner institutions. The office became an information base for both locals and internationals working with relief in the area.

The number of local staff members gradually increased to around 50 at the most (seed distribution end -94), while during the whole project period the core number of local staff was 15. Two expatriate staff members worked with the project most of the time and a third participated for a period of ten months during the middle of the project period. In April 1995 the offices closed and activities discontinued. By then 190000 people had returned to Milange.

The DRC activities included distribution of seeds and tools; rehabilitation of transit center and food storage warehouse; transportation of returnees; creation of a database for the registration of returnees; organized training seminars for local staff, volunteers and returnees and institutional support.

3.1 DRC's Role in the Local Community

When DRC started making contacts and establishing cooperation with the local Mozambicans, one of the first things they noticed was the strict division between Government and Renamo controlled areas. The areas were separated from each other in all ways except for formalized border lines. They were separated by physical area, political affiliation, level of development, and there was no free movement between them. To get in, one had to receive permission from the local leaders who controlled the areas. The Renamo areas in Milange had largely been cut off from relief activities and nobody really knew much about them. Consequently, the suspicions, rumors, assumptions about these areas and people there were rampant and not necessarily based in reality. When DRC arrived the Government authorities still had no access to Renamo areas and international agencies gained access only after long and complicated negotiations. One of the first concerns of DRC and IBIS was to get access to all areas of Milange, Renamo as well as Government controlled areas. That meant establishing contacts, a dialog and working relationship with both parties. It also involved the logistical aspects of building roads and providing transportation.

There was one person who had extensive knowledge about the Renamo areas from whom DRC gained a lot of insight and information. This was a Catholic Priest who had been working among the rural people for 25-30 years and knew both the local language, Chichewa, as well as the formal language Portuguese. Renamo trusted him and gave him permission to go virtually everywhere on his motorbike. His motivation was a deep and sincere humanitarian and Christian belief in assisting the local people in establishing peace. He was a great help to all the international aid workers when they arrived in Milange, and the most credible source of information regarding the political, economic and social conditions in the Renamo areas. He gave advice about what kind of assistance activities to implement in which areas, and he played a significant role in the long negotiation for a meeting between the Renamo leaders and the international organizations.

The Renamo leaders finally agreed to have a meeting with the international organizations in March 1993. At this meeting they negotiated three points: the distribution of emergency assistance by the World Food Program (WFP); a vaccination program by the World Health Organization (WHO); and the opening up of the most important roads by IBIS. Renamo agreed to distribution of relief items, family reunification activities, rebuilding of roads, schools and health posts.

Through various types of activities related to humanitarian assistance projects, reintegration of returnees and preparations for elections, the distinction between Renamo and the Government authorities gradually eroded. DRC contributed significantly to this process by providing

information to both parties, presenting new ideas and alternative thoughts about "the other", and by going into the Renamo areas to do surveys, evaluations, humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation. However, it was a slow and volatile process filled with problems, anxiousness and distrust on both sides. Both sides blamed each other for not complying with agreements. If relief did not arrive in time, trust was broken and projects had to be postponed. One example was when UNOLOG (the UN agency distributing food at the time) decided to stop food distribution to the Renamo controlled areas in May -93. Renamo was provoked and DRC together with UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and UNOLOG's logistics officer protested actively and put severe pressure for the food distributions to be resumed. Conflicts and disagreements on provincial and central levels affected relationships at the district level. Sometimes the process of reconciliation stopped completely up during which time DRC and the other organizations waited. While waiting they used every opportunity to build on the progress which had been made. Slowly the relationship between the two areas changed character and contact became almost a common occurrence and not the exception. By the end of 1994 the atmosphere had changed completely.

An important aspect of this reconciliation process between Renamo and the Government areas was the rehabilitation of many miles of roads into previously inaccessible areas and the construction of the road to the provincial capital Quelimane, which was at the other end of the province. The construction of this road meant that Milange no longer was cut off and isolated. It enabled people to resume old and important economic, social and political connections in other areas of the province and the provincial capital. It opened up for the development of these areas; increased people's freedom of movement considerably; and enhanced the rebuilding of community life.

3.2 Collaboration with NAR

DRC's main Government counterpart in Milange was the Government refugee agency Nucleo de Apoio Para os Refugiados (NAR). NAR was established to assist a relatively small group of South-African refugees in Mozambique, and had no previous experience working with returnees. As a result of the peace plan NAR was mandated with the responsibility of coordinating and facilitating the repatriation of the expected 1.5 million Mozambican refugees and acting as the Government counterpart to the refugee aid agencies. Most of NAR's expenses during the period of repatriation were covered by UNHCR. As most Government institutions in Mozambique they lacked both material and human resources and had problems related to centralization, bureaucracy and corruption. Most NAR staff members were new to the job; had a very low level of education; and had received little or no training for their job. When DRC arrived in Milange, NAR was grappling with some specific problems. In March 1993 the director of NAR was dismissed from his post accused of corruption and the agency was left with a very bad reputation in the community. None of the staff had received their salaries for six months, and they had no money for office facilities or stationary.

One of NAR's main responsibilities was to gather returnee statistics and provide UNHCR with regular monthly statistics from all districts of return. However, lacking education, training,

knowledge of the importance of collecting statistics, transportation and proper guidance and supervision, NAR staff members were often dysfunctional. Although NAR had received cars and other material assistance, the cars were used by the various chiefs in the organization and were not available to the registrars on the district level. The registrars were dependent on getting transportation and stationary from UNCHR or NGO staff during their travels in the field.

DRC's cooperation with NAR was based on material and advisory support and the director of DRC became NAR's advisor. Means of transportation (bicycles and giving lifts) and materials such as writing pads, pencils and blankets were provided for the NAR registrars when they stayed in tents along the border. DRC helped NAR systematize the information which was collected on the returnee registration forms and developed a database and program for the processing of the statistics. NAR staff were trained and supervised on the job, through seminars and frequent meetings. DRC put great emphasis on discussing with the local staff of both international and local partners general issues related to what was going on in the district and the country as a whole, i.e. elections, rehabilitation, reintegration, democracy, human rights, and more specific issued in their daily work, such as defining the different categories refugees, IDPs, soldiers, etc. and how NAR should relate to them (ie. provide assistance or not).

3.3 Strengthening of Accao Social

During the initial phase in Milange DRC had daily contact with the Department of Social Action (Accao Social) as it was involved in the repatriation, particularly in the reception of vulnerable groups of refugees. An informal working collaboration developed during 1993 from mutual tasks and problems and from very good relations between a few of the staff of both organizations. Based on the initial informal cooperation DRC was formally contacted by Accao Social's provincial leadership in Quelimane, which asked DRC to assist them locally in Milange district.

Accao Social had similar problems as NAR; it was in the process of establishing itself with a new role in a new context with minimal human and material resources. DRC assisted them with training, advice, coordination of activities, guidance and supervision in addition to giving logistical support (cars and bicycles), office facilities and materials. During 1994 DRC arranged training courses including Accao Social volunteers (among whom were several returnees), NAR staff and Mozambican Red Cross (Cruz Vermelha de Mozambique - CVM) volunteers. A total of 35 participated in these courses. The trainers were from the provincial capital Quelimane and one was a returnee from Malawi. In 1995 DRC paid for training a total of 50 volunteers for the pre-schools. They also provided funding for the so-called ABC program, which was a program to assist disabled people in the community, and established a petit-cash to cover small expenditures in the office. Accao Social was involved in the family reunification of children in Milange with the assistance of SCF-UK, and DRC supported the establishment of kindergartens in Milange town.

Together with UNHCR, DRC assisted Accao Social in developing a project document "Projecto de Desenvolvimento Comunitario" - community development project for Milange, which included grinding mills, wells, community centers, workshops for wheelchairs and prostheses, training of staff members and volunteers. This project document was submitted to a number of international organizations for funding. After DRC's departure in April 1995 Accao Social had difficulties readjusting itself to the situation of being without the DRC moral and material support, and about a month after DRC had left they seemed still to be somewhat paralyzed.

3.4 Assistance to the Mozambican Red Cross

DRC developed cooperation with CVM in a similar way, first through an informal daily working relationship which later became a formalized project. CVM in Milange was in a unique situation. Milange was the first district in the whole country where Renamo accepted a **national** NGO to be responsible for distribution of humanitarian assistance. Food distributions had previously been done by UNOLOG in Renamo areas and the Government organization for the prevention of disasters, DPCCN, in Government controlled areas. Although they had no prior experience, CVM started distributing food in August 1993 in Renamo areas. However, it was no easy task for the local staff members. The first CVM volunteers who went into a Renamo area were extremely nervous and anxious about staying there overnight. It went very well and they returned extremely relieved that that people there were "normal" and just like everybody else. By the end of that year the reconciliation had advanced so far that NAR and Accao Social also could work in those areas.

DRC also supported CVM with material resources, training and advice to staff members and the expatriate logistics officer functioned as their advisor. They rehabilitated a food-storage warehouse in Milange town and two others to the north of the town, which were used for food distributions. WFP provided food, while CVM was responsible for the distributions. DRC provided maintenance and mechanical repairs of their distribution trucks. CVM received training in how to identify areas in most need; how to conduct distributions in the districts; how to computerize their activities; and assistance with transportation in the district.

3.5 Transportation and Distribution of Seeds and Tools

When the Mozambicans returned from 5-10 years in exile they were faced with various problems of reintegration. There were security threats from demobilized soldiers in some areas and the existence of landmines in others. Many places there were no roads, no water or food, no health posts or schools. Most people returning lacked households utensils, agricultural seeds and tools, clothes and documentation of citizenship. DRC recognized the immediate needs of returnees to be transportation, food, seeds and tools and programmed accordingly.

The distribution of seeds and tools was closely coordinated with the other organizations in Milange to make sure all areas were covered. DRC completed three seeds and tools

distributions. The first was undertaken in 1993 in the north and central part of the district to 12000 families (50000 beneficiaries), which was paid by the Danish Bilateral Aid Agency (Danida). The second one was undertaken in 1994 in the central and southern part of the district to 12000 families (50000 beneficiaries) and was also paid by Danida. The last one was in 1994 in the district of Chire in 1994 to 10000 (50000 beneficiaries) and paid by UNHCR. However, first the road had to be opened and DRC donated 700 tool kits to the local people working on the rehabilitation of the road to Chire. In addition DRC distributed seeds and tools in the transit center in Milange town during the whole period. Virtually all of the seeds were bought locally in Milange, and was an important part of DRC's strategy in contributing to the reestablishment of the local economy.

Back in 1992-93 it was believed that the repatriation would happen as a mass-organized movement with mass transit-centers where the refugees would stay before they were taken to their final destinations. When DRC arrived in Milange in 1993, however, it was clear that these plans had been changed and the number of planned transit centers was greatly reduced. There was one transit center already in Milange town, which DRC assessed to be in need of rehabilitation. The physical conditions were very poor and it was poorly organized. DRC decided to rehabilitate the transit center and assist in reorganizing it. IBIS was contracted to build the transit center with a well. DRC also assisted in the transportation of the returnees to their final destinations. In all this construction and transportation work both DRC and IBIS employed a number of local people both as staff members and as hired labor. IBIS had at the most around 700 local people employed on various projects.

4. THE ACTIVITIES OF THE NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL

NRC first got involved with the Mozambican refugees through assistance programs in refugee camps in Malawi from 1989 to April 1994. NRC initiated its involvement in Mozambique in June 1992, some months before the Peace Agreement was signed, to assist in the repatriation of the refugees as well as the return of internally displaced persons. In February 1993 they established a head-office in Maputo in order to keep in close contact with the central authorities and the international community as well as assisting the repatriation in the southern part of the country from mainly Swaziland and South Africa. In addition, a sub-office in Tete provincial capital was set up to follow up on the transfer of program activities from Malawi. The field office in Tete was opened in June 1992, while the regional office in Maputo was established in March 1993 for a duration of three years each. The office in Tete had one expatriate throughout the period and five local staff, while the office in Maputo employed ten local and five expatriate staff members, two of whom were seconded to other organizations for one-year periods.

4.1 Conflict Prevention and Reconciliation

When the Mozambican program was being planned NRC decided to attempt to be more than just a "hammer and nails" organization, as NRC called the international community's concentration on logistics and infrastructure. This decision was a result of a general attempt

within NRC to focus more on the whole spectrum of protection and human rights issues while not excluding the hammer and nails activities. Various needs were identified through contacts with refugees and government institutions. The project included information and training; legal aid; registration and documentation; and issues related to land tenure.

The information and training activities consisted in providing awareness and information about the situation in Mozambique to the refugees in the camps through the production of theater plays, radio programs and videos. In the southern region it included radio broadcasts to refugees in South Africa and a play which was shown to refugees before they returned home. The play "Vestir a Terra" was produced by the professional Mozambican theater group Mutumbela Gogo about a refugee family before, during, after flight, and return to Mozambique. Mutumbela Gogo toured both inside Mozambique and in South Africa, Malawi and Zimbabwe. A new play was being planned about the returnees during the process of reintegration. In Tete the Instituto de Comunicacao Social (ICS) was NRC's implementing partner for the dissemination of information. They built a communications center in the transit center of Benga which had a radio station with a program every day of the week; showed videos; and functioned as a center for social gatherings. The radio programs provided information about a variety of daily issues; health, land tenure, registration and documentation, cultivation methods, seeds, tools, illnesses, local and national politics, the new constitution, etc. The programs were broadcast in both Portuguese and the local languages. ICS also organized a theater group to travel in the districts. A similar center was planned for the transit center in Changara district.

During a meeting with the Governors of five provinces (Zambezia, Tete, Sofala, Manica, Gaza) in August 1992 a need for registration and identification (ID) cards was identified. The first formal request for NRC funding came from the Governor in Tete. The need for ID cards was again acknowledged during a mission to Mozambican refugees in South Africa. The mission found that one reason Mozambican refugees hesitated to return was that they had no formalized Mozambican identity. They had a need for documents that proved citizenship while the Government needed to register them as citizens. NRC developed a project for civil registration and provision of ID cards which was implemented in coordination with the Civil registry and Documentation Authority. Registration brigades consisting of local people were created to do the actual work of registering people and giving them ID cards. The brigades covered Massingir district in Gaza, the whole province of Maputo, seven districts in Tete province and probably three districts in Niassa province. The project was executed both on the provincial and district levels.

Along with other international agencies NRC expected that there would be conflicts about land-use and ownership when all the refugees returned home. This was supported by scholars on the issue and the National Farmers Association. Mozambique is a huge country with land enough for everyone, but in some areas of the country there was competition for certain areas of land, either because they had good agricultural potential or there were other commercial interests (hunting, national parks, state farms, natural resources). Land disputes had been identified by the Land Commission and a few returnees. To fully understand the whole issue

of land rights and possibly design a project, NRC initiated a study of land tenure issues in Angonia, Tete province, which was a district with 95 percent returnees. It was carried out in 1993 with the objective of assisting the local population in finding useful mechanisms for division of land and legal protection of tenure. The study recommended support to district authorities for the issuing of titles to land. In May 1995 NRC received funding for the project to be carried out by the National Farmers Association and the National Land Commission. The issue of providing titles to the very many female heads of households and those in polygamous relationships was planned to be addressed in this project.

The large majority of the returnees were subsistence farmers. The identity of the rural population, especially women, was largely connected to the cultivation of a piece of land, the "machamba". In Mozambique the majority of the farm work was done by women and 90 percent of women were farmers. The women also collected water, did the grinding, took care of children and did most of the household activities. Men did some farm work and had traditionally done seasonal cash labor either on big state farms or worked in neighboring countries, such as South Africa and Zimbabwe. Returnee female heads of households very often could not produce enough to survive on and many of them were in great need of cash in order to buy other items, such as soap, clothes, salt, oil, etc. It had also been observed that during distributions of relief items female heads of households were often marginalized because the systems of distribution were unfair and corrupt. In 1993 the women's organization MULEIDE (Women, Law and Development) was paid by NRC to make a report on the legal situation of women returnees in Maputo. The report focused mainly on female heads of households who had repatriated spontaneously, and recommended action to secure returnee women's rights to land and citizenship. The study resulted in a follow-up registration project which registered female heads of households and their children in Maputo province. This was done in cooperation with the registration brigades where possible.

4.2 Institutional Support to the National Refugee Agency, NAR

In 1992 NRC was requested by the Mozambican Government to provide institutional support to NAR in order to improve its capability to attend to the protection and rehabilitation needs of the returnees.

A minor grant was contributed in 1992, while the major part of the project started in 1993. These activities included support to NAR staff members in the provinces of Maputo, Gaza, Niassa and Tete and to the assistants working in the districts in terms of transportation, training, purchasing of office equipment and other facilities. The staff members were trained in computer use, English language and refugee policy. An international staff member was seconded to the office of the national director in Maputo for one year to act as the advisor to the Director and to facilitate the NAR activities.

NRC had a lot of problems with this project. In NRC's opinion NAR failed to fulfill its role as implementing partner as stated in contracts and project documents. They needed guidance, supervision and monitoring to an extent which NRC could not give. NRC experienced a

certain resistance in NAR to get involved in activities related to land distribution, information and documentation. They found it difficult to get a dialogue going and be accepted as NAR's partner. NAR seemed to be concentrating on salaries, per diem and participating in meetings/seminars rather than implementing concrete assistance activities. Audits which were undertaken between the end of 1993 and September 1994 revealed that there was a large amount of money which NAR could not account for. Consequently, NRC asked NAR to revert the money and stopped the project for the time being. However, the trust between the two organizations had weakened considerably and since NRC did not think that NAR was working according to their program objectives, they decided to discontinue the collaboration with NAR.

4.3 Distribution of Relief Items

As was the case in Milange, people were in great need of food assistance and other items in the areas of NRC operation as well. Starting in August 1993 NRC distributed non-food items in the provinces of Gaza, Maputo and Inhambane to a total of 50000 families. This included agricultural tools and seeds, blankets, womens clothing (capulanas), and household utensils. The distributions were closely coordinated with local authorities, other NGOs, UNOHAC, UNHCR and the NGO coordinating body, LINK. The actual distributions were carried out in coordination with district authorities and village leaders. NRC staff members were present to monitor virtually all distributions. They received lists of all the beneficiaries and checked that the intended beneficiaries received the intended items. To make sure it reached all households in need, the items were distributed to women. If there was more than one adult in the household, i.e. several wives as polygami was common in Mozambique, they would each get a kit. This was a radical and unusual approach, as most organizations left it up to the community to organize distributions which often resulted in male domination on the receiving end. NRC went through local authorities and Renamo to get permission for distributions.

4.4 Basic Education

Very often refugees returned to areas with destroyed schools without facilities or teachers. Rebuilding of schools and provision of books and other items was therefore a great need most places. The students who had been attending school in Renamo areas or been in exile had not learned according to the Government curriculum. There was a similar problem with the teachers as most of them lacked the standardized government training, which they needed to be able to teach in the formal system. Systems of reintegrating both students and teachers into the formal system had to be devised.

NRC established a basic education project, which consisted in the distribution of school equipment, school books and the rehabilitation or construction of class rooms and teachers' homes in Tete, Maputo and Gaza provinces. A total of 20 schools were rehabilitated or built. NRC's main counterpart was the local branches of the Ministry of Education and they hired local people for the actual building. School books were distributed for free both in the South and in Tete. Two problems were encountered in Tete. Half of the 115000 books were stolen

from the warehouse. In some Renamo areas the books were not accepted because they were considered Government propaganda. They contained Frelimo symbols and rhetoric which was taken as a provocation.

4.5 Vocational Skills Training in Tete

In Malawi NRC had established a vocational skills training project in order to enhance the refugees' ability to survive upon return. It had targetted women, ie. around 60 percent of the participants were women. It included aquaculture (fish- and rice-farming), bakeries, beekeeping, bicycle repair, bicycle trailer production, blacksmithing, carpentry, mushroom farming, ox cart production, pottery, etc. When the project was moved to Mozambique they abandoned the focus on women as it was anticipated that women would be too busy with rebuilding their homes and livelihoods. 200 returnees were trained in fishfarming, tailoring and carpentry in Tsangano district, of which ca. 30 percent were women. This project was viewed by NRC as only partially successful because there was not a market for the items they produced in that area and people did not settle permanently in the area. The vocational skills training project was in the process of being implemented in Mutarara district, a Renamo controlled area which had seen a lot of destruction during the war and several security incidences since the Peace Accord. They were planning on doing tinsmithing and carpentry and the total number of participants was estimated at 150, most of whom were expected to be men.

4.6 Relationship with Renamo and Government

NRC worked closely with the Government on all levels and related to various Government institutions. The activities were closely discussed and coordinated with the Government both on the central and district/village levels and most of the activities were implemented in Government controlled areas. However, NRC also made contacts with Renamo on the central and district levels and implemented projects in a few of those areas. They took part in regular meetings where Renamo was present and they also had regular contact with the Renamo representatives in a couple of districts.

A group of NGOs in Maputo supported an initiative to create an NGO unit to coordinate the humanitarian and rehabilitation efforts with both the Government and Renamo. NRC was elected lead agency with the responsibility of establishing a secretariate. By April 1993 NRC had provided for a full-time expatriate position for one year, local staff and office facilities. After the initial six months LINK was formalized as a broad based NGO Coordination Unit. LINK working-groups were established and quite a lot of meetings and activities were initiated in all sectors including human rights education and training. After the initial year LINK was functioning as an independent organization with a number of different funders. As it turned out LINK provided a meeting place for Renamo and the Government to discuss general issues and to coordinate of practical assistance activities and strategies. As in Milange, the NGOs, including NRC, were very active in facilitating the meetings and acting as mediators when disagreements and problems occurred between the two parties.

In Tete, however, a special situation led to tensions between the Government and the international agencies. In 1993 the UN Peace-Keeping Operation (UNOMOZ) arrived to prepare for the elections. Prior to their arrival the international agencies had a good coordination system and relations with the Government. They had regular monthly meetings for information exchange and coordination of activities. When UNOMOZ arrived, the humanitarian affairs unit, UNOHAC, assumed the role as coordinator of the international community vis-a-vis the Government and Renamo. UNOHAC did not invite all the agencies for meetings and the monthly regular meetings were discontinued. Some of the NGOs, which resented having to work through the Government, decided to instead deal exclusively with the UN as the authority on assistance issues. This ended the good relations and coordination and it created a lot of tension between some of the international agencies and the Government.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF MAIN ISSUES

5.1 General Approaches

Whereas NRC and DRC had the same mandates to facilitate the repatriation and reintegration of Mozambican returnees and affected populations, the two organizations had different general approaches. NRC had decided that their activities in Mozambique should be more than merely "hammer and nails" and in that sense the Mozambique program was an experiment. This resulted in a large variety of activities spread out in area and content. Their range of contacts was also wide and spread out from the central level to the villages. DRC chose a much more limited area of operation and scope of activities. They concentrated their resources on strengthening local capacities more in-depth in only one district of the country.

Both approaches had positive and negative aspects related to peace and reconciliation processes. On the one hand, NRC was able to make important contacts with the Government and Renamo on the central level and implement a variety of different activities related to not only basic needs, but human rights education and training. On the other hand, they might have spread themselves so thinly that it decreased the opportunities of making positive impacts on reconciliation processes. DRC's role in promoting reconciliation in Milange is easier to identify. DRC had through living in the community and daily contact with all the actors on the aid arena gotten in-depth insight and knowledge about the community and therefore was able to play a significant role in promoting reconciliation between Renamo and Frelimo locally. DRC's role as mediator and negotiator between Renamo and Government in Milange was not the result of a pre-planned objective, but rather a result of an emerging need to facilitate reconciliation in order for them to implement their assistance program in both areas. It was DRC's insistence on providing assistance in Renamo areas which brought about the process. Likewise the collaboration with the three local institutions was not preplanned but rather a result of the collaboration processes going on between the community and DRC. DRC seized an opportunity which presented itself to assist and support local institutions. As NRC operated mostly in Government controlled areas they were not "forced", like DRC was, to play such a direct and instrumental conciliatory role in promoting cooperation. NRC was

dependent on Renamo cooperation only in a few places, e.g. Massingir in the south. NRC was, however, able to promote contact and cooperation on the central level through LINK and other agency meetings. And they were able to follow the rehabilitation and peace process from a national perspective.

The positive impact of the micro based strategy of DRC on the reconciliation process is easier to identify with certainty than the macro approach of NRC. In the context of the wider issues of reducing tensions and creating long-term stability, a micro-based approach, therefore seems preferable to a macro-based approach.

5.2 Targetting Assistance

In a general way both NRC and DRC targetted returnee populations by assisting people in areas with high concentration of returnees. However, further targetting was hardly done as both NGOs argued that it would create tensions in the community if some people were perceived as "singled out" for assistance. According to the international aid community, the policy of not distinguishing between the returnees and the rest of the population prevented tensions to arise in the community. Nevertheless, there were sources of tension, which certainly might have been adressed through targetting; targetting in the sense of ensuring that certain groups of people were **included**, not singled out, in the rehabilitation and reintegration activities.

A major source of tension on a general level was the growing polarity between the great majority of poor and the few people who were getting wealthy as a result of the development assistance. The new wealth and jobs were concentrated in the towns and the disparity between the rural poor and the urban wealthy was increasing. The polarization between the rich and the poor was happening everywhere where there was international assistance coming in. It contributed to distrust and dissatisfaction with the Government for not improving their lives in extreme poverty and hardship, and contributed to increased crime. The international NGOs might have contributed to counteracting potential instability caused by poverty and crime by being more aware of targeting the poorest and most vulnerable. Poor and vulnerable people are disadvantaged because of illiteracy, lack of time, overburden of survival tasks, illness, lack of skills, unemployment, lack of job experience and information. Two such groups in difficult circumstances were female heads of households and demobilized soldiers.

Many of the returnee female-heads of households were among the very poorest and at most risk of not being able to become self-sufficient. NRC recognized this and targetted women and female heads of households in some distributions and a couple of projects, such as the land tenure project and human rights education and training.

Another major source of tension was the big number of demobilized soldiers. They were illiterate, uneducated, unskilled without a job and many had no prior farming experience. They had already created a number of security incidences in Milange: the taking of hostages, hold-ups, occupation of agencies' offices in order to get food and non-food items. They had

posed a serious problem in some areas of Tete, especially Mutarara where they had disturbed delivery of aid several times and stolen from local people. In Milange very few NGOs had specifically targeted demobilized soldiers, although some had attempted to include them in project activities when possible. DRC included them in their seeds and tools distribution and IBIS a few as staff members or hired labor. Interest organization for demobilized soldiers existed, but were not functioning. NRC approached demobilized soldiers one place (Panjane) and offered them jobs, but was met by disinterest since they already had received assistance from UNOMOZ.

In not targeting assistance, ie. making sure the poorest and most vulnerable were included, the international community contributed to creating a greater disparity between the rich and the poor. Addressing the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable groups is important to prevent growing dissatisfaction and possible instability.

5.3 Supporting and Strengthening Local Capacities

Both NRC and DRC relied heavily on local capacities and both supported and strengthened them. They relied on local capacities in identifying needs and in carrying out activities. They supported both the Government and Renamo controlled areas, although in different ways.

DRC spent a lot of time and resources on supporting and strengthening the local institutions NAR, CVM and Accao Social. They supported the community by purchasing what they could locally, such as buying all of the seeds from the local market. They supported the local people by employing some as staff members, some as hired labor and by distributing basic needs so they could rebuild their homes and livelihoods. Rather than focusing on support to local institutions NRC initiated work in untraditional areas, such as human rights training and information. Local people were given training, information, utensils, material, know-how which supported the peaceful rebuilding homes and livelihoods. However, there were many difficulties and dilemmas with the ways in which the two NGOs chose to support local capacities.

A major problem in supporting and strengthening a local institution in a post-war context is the classical problem of creating dependency on aid. In a post-war context, such as the Mozambican, local institutions are likely to be impoverished and largely dysfunctional. In such a situation the aid agency has to provide the institution with virtually everything; office facilities, inventory, computers, means of communication, education, training, supervision, know-how, etc. However, unless the institution/organization is able to plan to become self-sufficient, it is doomed to fail when the support is eventually discontinued. DRC's support to Accao Social in Milange greatly improved their capacity to assist certain vulnerable and poor groups of the community, but they became largely dependent on DRC with regard to funding as well as supervision. The period immediately after DRC left they were paralyzed, and it remains to be seen whether they manage to survive. DRC acknowledged that they might not have paid enough attention to the hand-over process and securing continuity.

This situation illustrates another dilemma of humanitarian agencies working in post-war contexts; namely the problem of very short time-frames in which to provide the whole scale of development assistance. Providing assistance in post-war contexts straddles the analytical division between humanitarian assistance and development aid, and as such represent a challenge in planning and implementation. A post-war context has both short-term emergency characteristics and it has long-term aid characteristics. On the one hand, people still need food, shelter and clothing while on the other hand, they need assistance to rebuild their homes, livelihoods and communities. Both NRC and DRC had time-frames of two-three years, which is relatively long for traditional emergency work, but very short in relation to development processes. It is a short time considering how long developing local capacities takes for them to become effective and self-sufficient. NRC's problem with NAR might largely be attributed to the problem of time; with a time-frame of only two-three years they needed NAR to start working and showing results immediately and did not have time to start by sorting out various institutional difficulties. Consequently, in post-war contexts humanitarian aid agencies might consider planning for longer operational time periods than usual.

The various difficulties NRC was confronted with in NAR was another set of problems related to finding competent and effective local partners. As mentioned above, all the local institutions which were supported by DRC and NRC, Accao Social, CVM and NAR had problems with lack of training and education, incompetence, inefficiency, corruption and bureaucracy. Moreover, it might be difficult for international humanitarian organizations to justify working with local NGOs and Government institutions vis-a-vis headquarters and donors, because this type of work is not necessarily visible or quantifiable. This kind of support might easily be regarded as boosting corruption and self-interested staff members, rather than part of the implementation strategy. In hindsight NRC acknowledged that they might have approached NAR in a different way, ie. working more closely with them in daily assistance activities, and following up each project activity more closely to provide the guidance and supervision they needed.

Finally, the issue of neutrality among local and expatriate staff members made a difference both for DRC and NRC.

In Mozambique there was a general attitude among NGO staff that they were neutral and apolitical, i.e. that they did not discriminate between Government and Renamo areas and that they benefitted the whole population equally. DRC made a point of discussing the issues of neutrality, humanitarianism, emergency assistance and aid, etc. regularly with the local staff. They were careful that only the expatriate staff were involved in the negotiations between Renamo and the Government, because national staff members were often perceived as belonging to the "enemy". As very few people from Renamo areas had the necessary education and experience, national staff members were most often from Government controlled areas and often Frelimo sympathizers. Consequently, the national staff were often considered by Renamo as representing the interests of the Government. When discussing the issue of assistance activities in Renamo areas with NRC local staff, they said Renamo was extremely difficult to work with and in their experience it was not worth the time and effort to try to get into Renamo areas. It was obvious that their political opinions overshadowed the

ability to see the opportunity for promoting reconciliation. The NRC expatriate staff members had a different attitude; they recognized the possibilities in this approach and defined contact with Renamo as an important part of their work.

5.4 Relationship with the Government and Renamo

When the international agencies arrived to do post-war reconstruction work they had to get permission from the Government on the central, provincial, district and village levels regarding the type and area of activities. In Renamo controlled areas, the decisions were made by Renamo leaders. On the one hand, it was therefore important to have a good relationship with the various Government authorities to get all the formal permissions and to ensure proper implementation. On the other hand, it provided an opportunity to play an active role in the promotion of reconciliation between the Government and Renamo. It provided an opportunity to push the Government to permit activities in Renamo areas, and to push Renamo to allow access to their areas. As both Renamo and the Government initially were hostile and suspicious of each other the "outsiders" pushed them into contact and cooperation. Many places, as in Milange district, Renamo did not let the Government into their areas even long after the Peace Agreement, and initially they refused to even meet with Government officials or representatives. The NGOs acted as informal mediators; maintained contacts and dialogue; deconstructed enemy images; corrected false information; and encouraged them to meet and collaborate. DRC together with the other international organizations were buffers, go-betweens, mediators, informants, messengers, "ventilations" for frustration, irritation and anger on both sides. This led to a dispelling of myths, distrust and antipathies, and ultimately to a reduction of tension between Renamo and the Government in Milange. When DRC came to Milange there was no contact between Renamo areas and virtually no assistance activities there. Two years later the distinction had virtually been erased and Milange functioned as one unified district. DRC along with the other organizations played a significant role in this process by the way the humanitarian assistance was organized and implemented.

Good coordination between the NGOs enhanced their bargaining power vis-a-vis the government to enter Renamo areas. In the coordination it was important that their strategies were perceived as "fair" and "neutral" by both sides. If they separately coordinated only with the Government, they might have ended up working only in Government controlled areas. Many international aid workers were convinced that the Government did not care about developing the Renamo areas and that in many areas they received assistance only because NGOs took the initiative and insisted on it. In Milange DRC on their own initiative got involved in meetings with Renamo representatives and also went on trips into Renamo areas in order to present themselves and provide information about assistance activities. They were actively involved in attempting to get accurate statistics and information on the returnee population in the Renamo areas.

However, the balancing act of keeping good relations with both the Government and Renamo was not easy and posed some problems. In one Renamo area the leader did not accept the election results and was still submitting requests for assistance directly to the NGOs while

ignoring the proper channel, namely through the local Government authorities. What does the NGO do in such a situation? Treat it discreetly; hand it over to the government; or discuss the issue with Renamo? Treating it discreetly meant including their request in the project activities without informing the authorities. However, by doing so, they would be legitimizing Renamo as a separate authority. This would antagonize the authorities and increase the tensions between the Government and Renamo. Giving the request to the local authorities is using the "proper" channel and showing respect for the Peace Agreement but might antagonize Renamo. The best solution might be to discuss the issue with Renamo with a view to persuading them to go through the Government authorities by promising some kind of assistance.

The work done to bring Renamo and the Government together in Milange was considered by both the expatriates and the local population as the most significant role of the international aid agencies in Milange. One example of how important people considered the role of the NGOs can be illustrated by the following story told by an NGO worker in Milange. She had walked two hours into a previously inaccessible and isolated Renamo area where foreigners had not been previously. When the local population saw her arrive, they were totally amazed. They said that if she could walk so far just to meet them, peace must have come to Mozambique.